United Nations A/57/PV.56

General Assembly

Fifty-seventh session

Official Records

56th plenary meeting
Thursday, 21 November 2002, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kavan ..... (Czech Republic)

In the absence of the President, Miss Clarke (Barbados), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 22 (*continued*)

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations

(a) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/122)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.18)

(b) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/87)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.11)

(c) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/254)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.26)

(d) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/225)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.23)

(e) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/266 and A/57/266/Add.1)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.25)

(f) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/119)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.22)

(g) Cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/358)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.29)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

02-70350 (E)

(h) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/375)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.38)

(i) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Latin American Economic System

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/128)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.24)

(j) Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/386)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.32)

(k) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (A/57/576)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.31)

(l) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe: report of the Secretary-General (A/57/217)

(m) Cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/351, A/57/351/Corr.1)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.39)

(n) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of American States

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/267)

(o) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/405)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.28)

(p) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/475)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.21)

(q) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Executive-Secretary of the Preparatory Commission (A/57/255)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.40)

(r) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Southern African Development Community

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/94, A/57/94/Add.1)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.30)

(s) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of South-East Asian Nations

Draft resolution (A/57/L.16)

Mrs. Fotso (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): The Millennium Declaration states that:

> "Responsibility for managing worldwide economic and social development, as well as threats to international peace and security, must be shared among the nations of the world and should be exercised multilaterally. As the most universal and most representative organization in the world, the United Nations must play the central role." *(resolution 55/2, part I, para. 6)*

Given the complexity of global problems and the solidarity that is required among States, our

Organization has become the most appropriate forum for the development of fruitful and multidimensional international cooperation. The United Nations is not only at the heart of international cooperation; it is the driving force behind it. The role played by the United Nations in this area today is unique and irreplaceable.

Given the diversity of cultures and of peoples and the variety of geographical and socio-economic conditions prevailing on our planet, the regional organizations are indispensable to the management of the problems specific to regions and to subregions.

The well-being of peoples and their future are at the heart of the concerns of the United Nations and of the regional and other organizations. This reality underpins the cooperation that they maintain through a variety of agreements. This cooperation should be aimed not only at the financing of projects by the United Nations, but also, and especially, at strengthening the capacities of regional organizations. The United Nations has extensive experience, acquired over the years in dealing with a wide variety of situations, and it should share this experience with others.

Regional organizations should, in their activities, serve as effective relays for the work of the United Nations on the ground, thereby enabling the most effective use of the resources of the Organization. It must be acknowledged, however, that not all regional organizations require the same level of attention from the United Nations. Some expect from the United Nations system a stepped-up multi-sectoral cooperation because of their specific situation. This is the case of the African Union, which is responsible for dealing with the serious problems relating to peace, security and development in Africa.

Recognizing the need to meet the specific needs of Africa, the heads of State or Government gathered at the 2000 Millennium Summit and committed themselves to helping Africans in their quest to establish peace, achieve sustainable development and eliminate poverty, with a view to integrating the African continent into the global economy.

Africa has become keenly aware of the exigencies of its particular situation. The establishment of the African Union — the successor to the Organization of African Unity — in July 2002 in Durban, South Africa, and the establishment of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) are the outcome of this growing awareness.

The cooperation between the United Nations and the pan-African organization must focus on two current issues of interest to Africa. The United Nations maintains a very ambitious programme with respect to Africa, as was stressed by the Secretary-General in his report dated 19 October 2001. But the many problems that are specific to Africa must be dealt with in a particular and holistic way. That is why we deem it urgent to implement the idea of creating, at the level of the Secretary-General, a special structure responsible for African problems. Such a high-level structure would be charged with elaborating, formulating and coordinating all aspects of cooperation between the United Nations system and the African Union.

Along the same lines, the United Nations Liaison Office in Addis Ababa should be strengthened materially and given additional human resources, and the Permanent Observer Mission of the African Union at the United Nations should be brought more closely into play in connection with the United Nations activities relating to Africa.

Africa has high hopes for the African Union, particularly as concerns the promotion and the maintenance of peace and security in the continent. The United Nations must take a fresh look at its cooperation programme with Africa in order to adapt it to the new aspirations of the African Union. The Peace and Security Council and the council of wise persons envisaged under the Constitutive Act of the pan-African organization deserve the fullest attention of the United Nations insofar as their establishment and operation are concerned.

The Security Council's Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, established in January 2002, should place this question on its agenda.

In a continent ravaged by crises and which has the highest number of displaced persons and refugees in the world, special emphasis must be placed on post-conflict reconstruction operations. Multilateral programmes for disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and reconstruction must be created. By the same token, the support of the United Nations in prompting donors to contribute to the Peace Fund of the African Union should make it possible to come up with the resources required for financing disarmament,

demobilization, reintegration and reconstruction activities.

NEPAD, created under the auspices of the African Union — and which received a favourable response from the international community during the high-level debate held in the Assembly on this issue on 16 September last — requires particular support from the relevant United Nations agencies.

Africa expects from the United Nations and from its other partners the necessary support for NEPAD to be translated into concrete action. Cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations is particularly important in the social realm and in particular in the combat against HIV/AIDS. In this connection, we welcome the support of the United Nations for the convening — on the initiative of the First Lady of Cameroon, Mrs. Chantal Biya — of an African First Ladies Summit devoted to HIV/AIDS, which was held at Yaoundé on 15 and 16 November last.

The African Union, like NEPAD, has the support of the five subregional African organizations. We welcome the cooperation that the United Nations maintains with them, which makes it possible to take into account the specific characteristics of each.

Central Africa, a pivotal region in the heart of the African continent, is a microcosm of the ills that are undermining Africa. With this in mind, cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States should be strengthened in terms of the maintenance and consolidation of peace and security, and also in the quest for the economic integration of the subregion.

The public meeting of the Security Council held on 22 October last on the initiative and under the presidency of Cameroon on "Strengthening cooperation between the United Nations system and the Central African region in the maintenance of peace and security" is part of this set of considerations.

My delegation endorses and welcomes the statement made before the Assembly by the representative of the Republic of the Congo on behalf of the Economic Community of Central African States.

The presidential statement on Central Africa (S/PRST/2002/31) issued by the Security Council on 31 October last charted the course for a more dynamic cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States. It confirms the imperative need for closer cooperation between the United Nations and the regional and subregional organizations.

In conclusion, Cameroon welcomes the submission at this session of draft resolution A/57/L.38 on the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which we support and of which we are a sponsor.

The Acting President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 57/32 of 19 November 2002, I now call on Mr. Sergio Páez, President of the Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Mr. Páez (Inter-Parliamentary Union) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to begin by expressing the gratitude of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) to the United Nations and its Member States for having granted observer status to our organization. That decision represents an important milestone in the evolution of the relationship between the world organization of national parliaments and the United Nations. Both of our organizations were created to promote peace, security and the well-being of all nations. The IPU had its origins in the peace movement of the late nineteenth century. It is sustained by a basic principle that retains all of its validity today: that the problems confronting States should be solved through dialogue and communication, not through weapons or the threat of war.

Over the years, the Inter-Parliamentary Union has played a discreet but valuable role in bringing people closer together. As parliamentarians, we are particularly able to help solve problems by making use of our parliamentary and personal skills. Often, we are able to open channels of communication and to build bridges of international understanding when official diplomacy is unable or unwilling to do so.

The fundamental concept that underlies the exercise of democracy is respect for others. Democratic life entails both the right to differ and the acceptance of such differences by everyone. The point is to recognize and to accept diversity rather than to reject it. Parliamentary practice takes those differences and uses them to build majorities and to forge agreements; we parliamentarians can help to achieve the national consensus that is necessary for international action.

Certainly, parliaments are composed of majorities and minorities, of parties in power and those in

opposition, and it is in the fertile tensions of adversarial debate that we feel comfortable. We practice argumentation and prefer political dialogue to elegant consensus. Our mandates are bestowed by our electors, and if we do not fulfil their expectations, we lose our seats. Such are the rules of democracy. I mention that only to point out that the Inter-Parliamentary Union will never be able to offer a consensual opinion on the entire range of matters that are considered by the United Nations. And, I hasten to add, I do not believe that that will be expected of us. However, I believe that there are many areas in which the work of the IPU can be beneficial to the United Nations.

We are witnessing a sweeping evolution in international relations that makes it imperative to bring ordinary people closer to the work of multilateral cooperation and of international negotiating forums. In today's world of accelerated mass communication, where the most prominent national issues extend well beyond national borders, we have no other choice but to contribute much more actively to international cooperation. That is the reason why, two years ago, the Inter-Parliamentary Union brought to this Hall the presiding officers of the world's parliaments. In an unprecedented summit, the world parliamentary community, at the highest level, committed itself to providing a parliamentary dimension to international cooperation. The Declaration adopted on that occasion also stipulated that parliaments represent the sovereignty of peoples and can, with complete legitimacy, contribute to expressing their wishes in the international arena. That assertion is the basis for the first important step on the long road towards a more democratic international order.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union, the world's oldest international political organization, played a pioneering role in developing international cooperation well over 100 years ago. Like all international organizations, it has had to adapt to the new environment in which the world is operating. Like no other international organization, it has a prominent role to play in helping to make international cooperation more democratic.

Therefore, we welcome this opportunity to strengthen the relationship between the United Nations and national parliaments through the Inter-Parliamentary Union. The Millennium Declaration recognizes the need for the United Nations to work more closely with parliaments in various fields, including peace and security, economic and social development, international law and human rights, and democracy and gender issues. That, by definition, is a broad mandate. It coincides with that of the IPU, and this year's report of the Secretary-General on cooperation between our organizations (A/57/375) provides a wide range of examples in which the IPU has provided practical support to United Nations action in each of those fields.

As a democrat, I wish to emphasize the singular contribution that the IPU can make to the promotion of democracy. Our organization takes a holistic view of democracy, recognizing it both as an ideal to attain and as a system of governance. Democracy aims to preserve and to promote the dignity and the fundamental rights of the individual and therefore has much in common with development and social justice. It also ensures the people's participation in conducting the affairs of State. Any true democracy requires institutions that respect the rule of law and promote human rights. The Inter-Parliamentary Union has the ambition to promote movement towards internationally recognized democratic values. Bearing that in mind, in 1997 it adopted the Universal Declaration on Democracy, which establishes the fundamental principles of democracy and describes the components and the exercise of democratic government.

Our daily work in the Inter-Parliamentary Union reflects that vision of democracy. We place particular emphasis on the need to strengthen parliaments and democratic institutions, to build partnerships among men and women in political affairs and to strengthen human rights. By the same token, we promote development, specifically by supporting and providing parliamentary input to the processes launched by the United Nations in Monterrey and Johannesburg.

I would like to suggest that we examine together those areas where parliamentary interaction with the United Nations is of particular importance and urgency at this stage. More specifically, I would like to invite the Assembly to a dialogue with the Inter-Parliamentary Union in which we determine together how best parliaments, through the Inter-Parliamentary Union, can assist in following up and implementing the Millennium Declaration and achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

For our part, the Inter-Parliamentary Union is committed to a new stage of cooperation with the

United Nations that will provide genuine mutual benefit to both organizations. Members may rest assured that the resolution addressed to the IPU in the part of the Millennium Declaration that deals with the strengthening of the United Nations will not fall on barren ground. It will be taken up with the utmost seriousness by the parliaments of IPU, in close partnership with the members of the United Nations.

The Acting President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 33/18 of 10 November 1978 and General Assembly decision 53/453 of 18 December 1998, I now call on the observer for the International Organization of la Francophonie.

Mr. Bouabid (International Organization of la Francophonie) (*spoke in French*): The French-speaking community is grateful to the Secretary-General for his availability and for his efforts to enrich cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie. The report before us on this issue, I believe, clearly underlines the desires of both organizations, on the one hand, to consolidate the achievements made since 1995, when this item was first inscribed on the General Assembly's agenda, and, on the other, tirelessly to seek new avenues in which the complementarity between the two organizations can be fully expressed in the service of peace and the development of French-speaking countries.

We have watched this complementarity become ever more concrete in averting or stemming potential or declared conflict situations, in encouraging and entrenching the culture and practice of democracy, and in promoting dialogue and cooperation by eliminating the logic of force and the cycle of violence. We have seen this complementarity expressed in a series of development initiatives and projects that have been undertaken jointly with agencies of the United Nations system and that cover such diverse fields as education, training, energy, human rights protection and the promotion of information and communication technologies. Ultimately, we owe this complementarity to a common approach that favours the force of dialogue over the dialogue of force, that works resolutely for peace, security and sustainable development and that, more broadly, advocates respect for diversity by giving ample space to the dialogue among cultures and civilizations. The events that are currently dominating the international scene fully confirm the need to continue along this path.

That is why the most recent Francophonie summit, held in Beirut just a month ago, focused its work on the subject of dialogue among cultures. In basing itself on a very broad definition of culture, la Francophonie has sought to make a specific project of that dialogue which presupposes full acceptance of diversity in all aspects of life, including international life. What better place than Lebanon, a country of ancient roots that has been home to successive peoples and civilizations, to engage in fruitful reflection on the dialogue among cultures — a dialogue capable of generating new spaces for cooperation among civilizations in the context of shared complementarity.

An instrument of peace, democracy and human rights and an ineluctable pillar of development, the dialogue among cultures is a powerful engine

> "to fight poverty and contribute to the emergence of a more equitable form of globalization that will bring progress, peace, democracy and human rights, in full respect for cultural and linguistic diversity, in the interests of the most vulnerable populations and the development of all countries". (*A/57/L.29, sixth preambular paragraph*)

This is the strategy set out in the Beirut declaration. This is the platform that guides our action. This is the vision that inspires our cooperation with our international partners, including the United Nations.

The report of the Secretary-General lists specific examples of our activity in partnership with the United Nations to contribute to the achievement of our common goals. This cooperation has developed along the right lines, grown richer from year to year and covers the most diverse fields. We particularly welcome the appreciation expressed for this cooperation in draft resolution A/57/L.29.

I believe, however, that we can go further still, particularly in two priority areas that we feel could be explored further and generate an even more sustained dynamic of cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie.

The first is that of sustainable development. From the preparatory phases of the Rio Summit to the recent adoption of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, la Francophonie has played an active part, especially by way of supporting the development of national sustainable development policies in French-speaking

countries and mobilizing necessary expertise to those ends. In Johannesburg, we had the opportunity, through a series of workshops, to update participants on our contribution to the implementation of Agenda 21 and on the framework for action that will guide our activities over the next 10 years in the follow-up to the Johannesburg Summit. There are vast opportunities for cooperation here. I hope that we will be in a position to explore them further, particularly in support of the New Partnership for Africa's Development and in the light of the forthcoming tenth summit conference of la Francophonie, to be held in Burkina Faso in 2004 under the central theme of sustainable development.

By way of illustration, I wish to cite two initiatives in which we should like to see the United Nations significantly involved. The first is a projected international high-level meeting that la Francophonie intends to organize in follow-up to the conference of economic and finance ministers of the French-speaking countries, held in Monaco in 1998, and on the basis of the Monterrey Consensus. This meeting will seek to establish synergies and support mechanisms for bilateral and multilateral, public and private, North-South and South-South partnerships and above all to improve the access of French-speaking countries of the South to multilateral sources of financing. Then, as a follow-up to the Johannesburg Summit, la Francophonie wishes next year to initiate partnership with the bilateral and multilateral actors concerned, aimed at implementing and consolidating a worldwide French-speaking information system on sustainable development, strengthening capacities in the field of energy for sustainable development and controlling the management of the environment and of sustainable development.

Besides sustainable development, the second priority field to be further explored is that of support for democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Ever since the adoption of the Bamako Declaration, la Francophonie has had recourse to a legislative instrument covering the entire field of democracy, the rule of law and human rights, together with a preventive, proactive and reactive policy mechanism. Procedures are defined in the Declaration to monitor the practices of democracy in the French-speaking community. These procedures are aimed at prevention and the adoption of specific measures and actions in the case of democratic crisis and grave human rights violations or of democratic breakdown or mass violations of human rights. These steps are designed to facilitate the achievement of consensus solutions to crises and to promote the restoration of constitutional order. What we are trying to do here is to help States to overcome certain difficulties. We are not putting anyone on trial here. It is not a question of judging, but rather of helping and accompanying countries, by means of consultation, which makes it possible to combine solidarity, promptness, flexibility and effectiveness. This is the second area of undertaking in which cooperation with the United Nations is to be encouraged.

In conclusion, I would like to say that we express our appreciation to the Lebanese delegation on behalf of the OIF, for having introduced the draft resolution on this agenda item, and also, likewise, express our gratitude to the 70 countries — French-speaking and non-French-speaking alike — who became sponsors of this text. We are grateful to them for the token of support that they have shown for this young but promising cooperation between the United Nations and la Francophonie.

The Acting President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 35/2 of 13 October 1980, I now call on the Observer of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO).

Mr. Kamil (Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization): Through you, Madam, I wish to thank the President of the General Assembly for giving me the honour of addressing this Assembly on behalf of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO). We have closely monitored his wise and smooth approach while presiding over the work of the Assembly. We congratulate him and wish him all the success needed to complete the session and achieve all its goals.

While introducing the item and the draft resolution, the current President of the AALCO and head of the Nigerian delegation referred to the potential role of AALCO in promoting international law in Asia, Africa and beyond. I thank His Excellency and always hope to meet the expectations of member States and United Nations organizations in our quest to enhance the rule of law in international relations for better international cooperation.

Before elaborating on our programme for cooperation between United Nations and AALCO, allow me to explain why we are so motivated in

enhancing this cooperation. The United Nations, in spite of its limitations, has made significant contributions towards maintaining international peace and security, as well as in the economic and social fields. The awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to the United Nations in 2001 was a recognition of its valuable contribution in these areas.

The Millennium Declaration, adopted unanimously in September 2000, articulated and affirmed the role and vision of the United Nations in meeting the challenges of the twenty-first century. In that Declaration, the United Nations Member States reaffirmed their determination, inter alia, to establish a just and lasting peace, to uphold the sovereign equality of all States, to resolve disputes by peaceful means, to respect human rights, to respect the rule of law in international as well as national affairs and to make the United Nations more effective in monitoring peace and security by giving it the resources and tools it needs for conflict prevention, peaceful settlement of disputes, peacekeeping and peace-building. It is a matter of great satisfaction that the Declaration attached importance to strengthening cooperation with regional organizations in achieving these objectives.

As a regional legal organization, we are proud to cooperate with the United Nations. We are determined to enhance and strengthen this cooperation, and we are motivated to urge each and every nation and organization to do so.

We are fully convinced of the necessity of this cooperation, and we totally believe in the invaluable role that the Organization plays and should play as a forum for the nations of the world, its peoples and Governments, and in its unique quest to relieve the suffering that could afflict the international community as a whole, in part, or even one human being. Do we not all know that each and every individual is a microcosm, whether he lives on Fifth Avenue or on the smallest unpaved street in the nooks and crannies of an Asian or African village?

We should always remember that the first five words in the Preamble of the Charter set the tone for the whole Charter; it commits the Organization to symbolizing the aspirations of the world population. We believe strongly that it is the living conscience of humanity.

When I speak of the "living conscience of humanity", I underline that the selected diplomats and officials from all over the world should remind themselves when gathering here in this important venue that it is with a living conscience and the awareness that they are brothers and sisters, that they are men working to save and to help men and that they are gathered to eliminate and resolve animosities of all kinds.

In the minds of the representatives of the nations united here, the United Nations is, and should always be, the sole forum of conciliation and harmonization on the planet. They should be constantly aware that it is the last resort for success in avoiding the roaring of the guns and the launching of rockets to different destinations and, of course, the horror of using weapons of mass destruction.

The United Nations Organization was, is and should be the giant symbol of peace and security for humanity. Without these two fundamental pillars — peace and security — we will not be able to build and implement the United Nations programmes of development in all fields in order to bridge the gap between rich and poor nations.

Peace and security entail many needs in order to be maintained, but that which is dearest to humanity is the supremacy of the rule of law, its enhancement, its implementation and, above all, its respect by all nations for the benefit of all nations and peoples, with full determination and good will. Therefore, we fully agree with the wise ideas expressed by the United Nations Secretary-General when he said to reporters that success depends on national efforts and that all the United Nations can do is to keep reminding Governments of their pledges and urge them to do whatever is needed to make them come true. He also said that if we carry on as we are, most of the pledges are not going to be fulfilled and we are, therefore, moving too slowly.

AALCO, for its part, is committed to playing its role in preserving these noble objectives. Indeed, it has taken several initiatives in this direction. Again, I would like to reaffirm our full commitment to working with the United Nations and other sister organizations in making a joint and concerted effort to establish a shared future based on fundamental human values.

Allow me to turn to some specific activities of AALCO. Today, it is a full-fledged intergovernmental organization. It has embarked upon a wide range of activities, which include the consideration of issues

referred to it by Member States, assistance to Member States in the preparation of model legislation, extensive cooperation with the United Nations and its Agencies, training programmes and the dissemination of information on international law matters.

The current work programme of AALCO includes several items related to matters of contemporary international law. I wish to elaborate on its work in just a few areas. I shall begin with the issue of international terrorism.

Issues concerning international terrorism have always had great importance, and especially so after the tragic incident in New York on 11 September last year and more recent events in other parts of the world. The United Nations has been playing a central role in mobilizing international action and support to meet the threat of terrorism. Regrettably, negotiations for the conclusion of a comprehensive international convention to combat international terrorism have been marking time because of pending issues. During its last two annual sessions, AALCO has considered that and other related issues. It is our view that the need of the hour is to demonstrate the political will to resolve the issues pending and to complete work on the international convention as soon as possible. The Counter-Terrorism Committee established by Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) is doing useful work that will facilitate achieving the overall objective of strengthening the legal regime to combat international terrorism.

The legal regime concerning the protection of human rights has been built on the solid foundation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent international instruments. However, sometimes, the politicization of human rights issues affects the unbiased implementation of those instruments. In that context, I wish to mention that AALCO, in implementing the Memorandum of Understanding, has, in cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, started a comprehensive programme on this item. At AALCO's 41st session, held in Abuja in July of this year, a special meeting on human rights and combating terrorism was organized with the assistance of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Among the issues discussed were problems related to the application of human rights standards in a terrorist situation and the gaps that exist within current international legal structures. At that session, an item entitled "Human Rights in Islam" was included on the agenda of AALCO.

The environment and sustainable development are other areas that have attracted worldwide attention. The recent World Summit held in Johannesburg reaffirmed the importance of the effective implementation of Agenda 21. AALCO has been monitoring progress in its implementation, as well as that of the international conventions on the environment. I had the privilege of addressing the high-level segment of the Eighth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in New Delhi recently. Highlighting the concerns of developing countries, I stressed the importance of adhering to the principle of common yet differentiated responsibilities within the Framework Convention process. In order to give a new thrust to its programme in the field of environmental law, AALCO plans to establish an energy and environmental law centre.

The issue of the status and treatment of refugees has been considered by AALCO for over 35 years. The adoption of the revised text of its Bangkok Principles on the Status and Treatment of Refugees at its New Delhi session in 2001 was a landmark decision. With a view to further strengthening cooperation between UNHCR and AALCO, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by High Commissioner Ruud Lubbers and myself on 23 May 2002. The Memorandum of Understanding, as well as formalizing the long-established cooperation between the two organizations, provides for the exchange of documents, mutual consultations and joint initiatives by both organizations. In the furthering of this objective, we intend to hold a seminar early next year on issues concerning secondary movement, an agenda for protection and burden-sharing.

Other humanitarian issues, such as the protection of migrant workers and trafficking in women and children, have also received ample consideration in AALCO meetings.

At a time when the movement of money across borders is becoming increasingly difficult to regulate and the concerns of good-governance occupy centre stage, it is not surprising that the ongoing work within the United Nations on the adoption of an international convention to combat corruption has drawn attention from all sections of the international community.

Therefore, an item entitled "An Effective International Legal Instrument Against Corruption" was placed on the agenda of AALCO's 41st session.

Since then, AALCO participated in the Ministerial Meeting held in Addis Ababa in September this year under the auspices of the African Union, which finalized a draft convention on preventing and combating corruption. We are planning to participate in the negotiations in the ad hoc committee established by the General Assembly of the United Nations, to be held in Vienna in January 2003. We also intend to participate in the forthcoming Global Forum III, which will be held in Seoul in May 2003.

Most of the AALCO member States attach great significance to the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and welcome the entry into force of the Rome Statute on 1 July 2002. The entry into force of the Rome Statute in less than 4 years after signature is a historic milestone for the international criminal justice system. We do hope that the ICC will be fully operational, as has been anticipated, in the year 2003.

However, the future development of the International Criminal Court will be determined by a number of factors. In order to exercise its jurisdiction, to build States' confidence and trust in the Court and to achieve its universality, the Court should, inter alia, operate in strict accordance with the following principles: first, the jurisdiction of the Court should be confined to the most serious international crimes, as provided in the Rome Statute; secondly, the function of the Court should not contravene the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations; and thirdly, the ICC should perform its functions in an objective, impartial, independent and just manner and should be free from political prejudice and double standards. At the same time, we hope that there will be universal support for and cooperation on the ICC, which would be conducive to the development of international law and to putting an end to impunity.

We are happy to note that the General Assembly will hold a special meeting to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the conclusion of United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The item on the Law of the Sea has been on the agenda of AALCO since 1970. It is a matter of pride for me to mention that concepts such as exclusive economic zones, archipelagic States and the rights of landlocked States, which have found their place in the 1982 Convention, had their origin in the deliberations of AALCO meetings. I hope the commemorative meeting will give new ideas to reinvigorate the implementation of the Convention on the Law of the Sea in an effective manner, especially the principle of the common heritage of humankind.

Another area of utmost concern to the Asian and African States is the tragic consequences of civil wars and fratricidal conflicts, resulting in the displacement of populations. The fact that the total number of internally displaced persons has gone beyond the population of world refugees is by itself an indicator of the enormity of the situation. The root causes of displacements, such as competition for the control of land and other scarce natural resources, disintegrating social and political structures at the domestic level, intolerance towards multiculturalism and growing disparities between the rich and the poor, are things that need to be addressed by the United Nations and by the respective regional organizations. In that context, the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization is monitoring with great interest the United Nation's efforts to coordinate protection and humanitarian assistance for internally displaced persons and the debate concerning the normative framework provided by the 1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.

Finally, in the 57 years since the United Nations was established, the world has seen many ups and downs. While great progress has been made in many fields, there could have been much more. Today, the military expenditures of the world's nations have gone up to $900 billion. Diversion of even a small percentage of that expenditure could alleviate poverty, help eradicate the deadly HIV disease and provide millions of people around the world with adequate shelter, food and health care. Unfortunately, we are still not prepared to accept this. The continued conflicts in the Middle East and in many other parts of world are potent reminders of how hollow are our approach and commitment to the cause of peace and progress in the economic and social fields. We sincerely hope that all this will improve with the help of the United Nations and the cooperation of all organizations and nations. It is imperative that the world which we inherited must not be passed on to future generations as it is today. We have to make their world safer — and sane.

The Acting President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 46/8 of 16 October 1991, I now call on the Observer for the Caribbean Community.

Mr. Granderson (Caribbean Community): The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) secretariat is deeply honoured to participate in this debate on cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community. Since we last addressed this body, in November 2000, unprecedented events have radically transformed our perspective on the nature of potential threats to our societies. The far-reaching and devastating impact of those events has underscored once again the interdependent nature of all our societies, the large and the small, the weak and the powerful. It has also underscored the inestimable value of democratic governance and the critical importance of multilateralism in our quest for global development and in the maintenance of international peace and security.

In its own thrust on improving the well-being of the citizenry of the Caribbean Community and laying the foundation for the sustainable development of all CARICOM member States, our region has focused considerable attention and resources on the establishment of a CARICOM Single Market and Economy. This major undertaking seeks to have the region operate as one market and economic space, thus allowing the free movement of the key factors of production: persons, capital, goods and services. It is CARICOM's response to the formidable challenges of the changing international economic and trade environment fuelled by the forces of globalization and trade liberalization.

The United Nations, through the various organizations, specialized agencies and programmes of the United Nations system, has provided tremendous support to the Community's efforts to establish, and now to implement, the various aspects of the Single Market and Economy. For this we wish to formally express our appreciation. Particular mention must be made of the technical assistance received through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) under the regional cooperation frameworks for Latin America and the Caribbean. The second regional cooperation framework for Latin America and the Caribbean, for the period 2001-2005, aims to promote sustainable human development and poverty reduction in line with the Millennium Declaration commitment to halve the number of people living in extreme poverty by 2015.

Assuming that the Caribbean will continue to attract 25 per cent or more of resource allocation, CARICOM has identified several project activities for support under the Caribbean component of the second regional cooperation framework. This will take into account areas such as implementation of the Single Market and Economy, support for the establishment of the Caribbean Court of Justice, support for the Pan-Caribbean Partnership against HIV/AIDS, constitutional reform, poverty alleviation, development of information and communication technology in CARICOM, support for micro and medium-sized enterprises and disaster management.

A critical component of the Single Market and Economy is the establishment of the legal infrastructure to resolve disputes arising from its operation. The Community is pleased to announce that the agreement establishing the Caribbean Court of Justice entered into force in July this year. The Court, which will exercise both an appellate and an original jurisdiction, is considered to be one of the most dynamic steps being made by member States in deepening the regional integration movement, and is a significant turning point in our judicial institutional development. In July 2002, CARICOM Heads of Government agreed on immediate measures to inaugurate the Caribbean Court of Justice by the second half of 2003. They also agreed to the establishment of a trust fund in the sum of $100 million to ensure that the financing of the Court will not be mitigated by monetary or political considerations and thus to guarantee its sustainability and complete independence.

The Caribbean Community again wishes to acknowledge the continued support and cooperation of the United Nations in the establishment of the Caribbean Court of Justice. As recently as August of this year, CARICOM and UNDP signed an agreement which will provide $300,000 to support the work towards the establishment of the Court, with funding from the Government of Japan through its Human Resources Trust Fund. That sum will go towards such activities as judicial education, sensitization of national judicial establishments, implementation of information systems and facilitation of legal research.

Another area critical to the region's economic and social development is that of health, and particularly the region's approach in dealing with the multifaceted aspects of HIV/AIDS. Cooperation in that area is, needless to say, imperative, dealing as it does most starkly with life and death issues and the attendant social and economic costs to our already small and vulnerable countries. Cooperative efforts with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) in regional negotiations for low prices for antiretroviral drugs were bolstered when the Prime Minister of Saint Kitts and Nevis, the CARICOM head of Government with portfolio responsibility for health, officially requested of UNAIDS assistance with an Accelerated Access Initiative for the Caribbean region. Subsequently, several member countries have pursued benchmark negotiations. These regional *en bloc* negotiations for antiretroviral drugs resulted in the signing of an agreement between the CARICOM secretariat and six major pharmaceutical companies in Barcelona in July 2002. CARICOM is also appreciative of the support of its international partners in the Pan-Caribbean Partnership against HIV/AIDS, in which the United Nations is an important actor. Collaboration with its partners has also resulted in the preparation of a proposal to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, also identified as another priority for our region.

The cooperation between the Caribbean Community and the United Nations continues to yield tangible results, helping to improve the well-being of our citizens and to fuel the engine of development, which we are assiduously pursuing.

In the area of security, we are conscious that the unprecedented terrorist assaults of 11 September require, as a matter of urgency, continued extraordinary vigilance and coordination. CARICOM member States participated actively in the deliberations held in the aftermath of those attacks and are firmly committed to fulfilling their individual and collective obligations under Security Council resolutions 1368 (2001) and 1373 (2001). We are equally committed to putting in place the necessary measures to comply with the new international regulations and standards regarding the safety of aircraft, airports and seaports, and we continue to cooperate with the United Nations to achieve this objective.

We also value our collaboration with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme in addressing the traditional threats to the security and stability of our States posed by the illicit trade in narcotics, organized crime and money laundering.

For CARICOM member States, the definition of security has a far wider reach than the traditional military interpretation. For us, security is multidimensional in nature and encompasses issues related to drug trafficking, the proliferation of small arms, organized crime, HIV/AIDS and other public health concerns, poverty, the environment and natural disasters. Attacking poverty and underdevelopment, from which often emerge other human security threats, has been an integral aspect of the Community's thrust.

In this regard, the follow-up to the United Nations International Conference on Financing for Development is therefore critical. We share the assessment of the United Nations that, while the Millennium Summit provided the overarching objectives, Monterrey indicated the path to be followed. Even though the Monterrey Conference was devoid of any bold new initiatives for the mobilization of innovative financial resources to facilitate the goal of financing for sustainable development, CARICOM believes that the resulting action should involve an effective follow-up process leading to decisions at the national and international levels that require strong political will.

In this regard, CARICOM States are generally supportive of the identification of the General Assembly and its high-level dialogue as the focal point for the follow-up to the Monterrey Consensus and are of the view that a vital component of this follow-up must be an effective reporting and monitoring mechanism to measure implementation, identify obstacles and gaps, and make recommendations for further implementation. CARICOM is also supportive of the role to be played by the Economic and Social Council, subject to the strengthening of that body and its expansion, to allow for equal participation of all States Members of the United Nations.

At this juncture, I wish to express CARICOM's appreciation to the United Nations, which, through its Financing for Development secretariat, provided funding for the participation of an expert from the CARICOM secretariat in the preparatory meetings for the Monterrey Conference and in the Conference itself. That initiative facilitated the secretariat's coordination of the region's preparation for its participation in the

Conference, a mandate given to it by the Conference of Heads of Government.

Another development-based international conference in which the region placed great store was the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Although the Summit did not produce a particularly dramatic outcome, some important results, in the form of new targets and timetables, were achieved. Notwithstanding the imprecision of many of those targets, they addressed some of the concerns and issues of interest to CARICOM States.

For our States, however, a major achievement was the launching of more than 300 voluntary partnerships and the mobilization of additional resources, in excess of $235 million, to support efforts to implement sustainable development initiatives. Especially encouraging is the fact that the partnerships, tied to the Government commitments, provide a built-in mechanism to ensure implementation.

CARICOM States also applaud the review of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island States and the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development. A critical outcome of the summit of importance to CARICOM States is the endorsement of the decision to undertake the review of the Barbados Programme of Action by 2004. I hardly need to reiterate that, within the context of the challenges of development, small island developing States experience specific problems arising from small size, vulnerability to natural disasters and external shocks, and a variety of other constraints. There is a need to supplement the efforts being made at the national level through adequate financial and technical support.

Our environment is of critical concern, and a major element of our collective environment is the Caribbean Sea, whose azure waters hold the economic future of many of our member States. The Caribbean Sea has a number of unique characteristics and is a critical factor in the economic development of the countries of the region. The initiative by the Governments of the wider Caribbean region to have the Caribbean Sea recognized as a special area within the context of sustainable development has met with partial success, with the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 54/225, entitled "Promoting an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development". We urge the wider international community to continue to support the Caribbean region in protecting this vital lifeline.

The Caribbean Community looks forward to continued close collaboration with the United Nations and its specialized agencies. As the report of the Secretary-General on cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community illustrates, we have worked successfully with the bodies and agencies mentioned earlier, as well as with the other specialized agencies. It would, however, be remiss of me not to mention the close collaboration which exists with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, which continues to lend technical support to the activities and undertakings of our member States.

In conclusion, cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other international organizations is a valuable and mutually reinforcing mechanism that helps the international community to face more effectively the multiplicity of challenges with which it is confronted.

The Caribbean Community trusts that the relationships and linkages established with the entities of the United Nations system in the areas of economic and social development and of cultural, political and humanitarian affairs will grow from strength to strength for the benefit and development of the Caribbean region.

The President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 477 (V) of 1 November 1950, I now call on the observer for the League of Arab States.

Mr. Mahmassani (League of Arab States) *(spoke in Arabic)*: The report of the Secretary-General before the Assembly summarizes the areas of cooperation between the United Nations system and the League of Arab States, including their respective specialized agencies and programmes, for the period from July 2001 to August 2002. Highlights for the period under review include the visit of the Secretary-General to the Summit Meeting of the League of Arab States held in Beirut in March 2002, as well as the convening of a sectoral meeting between the two organizations in Cairo in June 2002 on the topic of the use of information technology in development. The report emphasizes the gradual and steady development of cooperation between the two organizations.

This fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly coincides with the thirtieth anniversary of

the inclusion of the item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States" on the agenda of the regular session of the General Assembly, and of the adoption of the first resolution on cooperation between both organizations. Two decades have passed since the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and of the League of Arab States, respectively, signed an agreement to enhance the cooperation between the two organizations in the area of peace and security in the Middle East, in conformity with the principles of the Charter. A review of some of what has been achieved in this context could lead to the further consolidation of its importance and usefulness, emphasizing not only the economic and political aspects but also the social, humanitarian and administrative benefits.

Not very long ago, when there was talk about war against Iraq, cooperation between Amr Mussa, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, and his colleague Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations, facilitated the first steps towards the de-escalation of the situation. They succeeded in their efforts to convince Iraq to accept the return of the inspectors without conditions, thus contributing to the unanimous adoption of Security Council resolution 1441 (2002). Iraq's acceptance of that resolution has further advanced a principal objective of the League of Arab States: and to help prevent military action against Iraq and to preserve its unity and territorial integrity.

The League of Arab States is committed to the principle of international legitimacy. It would like to emphasize paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) relative to the establishment of a zone free from weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. It would also like to stress that it is eager to deal comprehensively, not selectively, with the issue of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. The international community should seek to disarm Israel, whose weapons of mass destruction constitute a real threat to the entire Arab region.

At previous sessions the Assembly recommended the convening of sectoral meetings on issues such as trade and development, youth and employment and the use of information technologies for development. We would like to take this opportunity to convey, through you, Mr. President, the gratitude of the League of Arab States to the Secretariat for its efforts to guarantee the success of both general and sectoral meetings. It is our hope that a joint meeting can take place at which a complete assessment can be made. Such meetings are an important means of ensuring cooperation, undertaking evaluations and reaching agreements on new mechanisms to strengthen cooperation in all fields, such as conflict prevention. This can be achieved only if both organizations are represented at such joint general or sectoral meetings at the highest level possible.

The participation of the League of Arab States in joint meetings between the United Nations and regional organizations, which are held at United Nations Headquarters, has been positive and effective. It has expressed its views on ways to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations, the League of Arab States and regional organizations with a view to dealing with the multifaceted challenges involved in such international and regional efforts, especially the problem of selectivity and double standards, with a view to cooperating coming up with creative solutions to problems.

The General Assembly's adoption of the draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States (A/57/L.32) is part of the joint effort by both organizations to establish a just and lasting peace in the Middle East on the basis of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and resolutions of international legitimacy, in particular Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978), the principle of land for peace and the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the establishment of an independent State with Jerusalem as its capital. In this context, I should like to refer to Security Council 1397 (2002), which affirms the international legitimacy of the vision of the establishment of an independent Palestinian State.

The League of Arab States has continued to present a series of initiatives at Arab summits emphasizing the Arab choice of peace as a strategic option. The initiative adopted at the Beirut Summit was the culmination of a sincere Arab effort to bring about just peace in the religion. However, the Government of Israel continues to refuse, and to reject peace, and is pursuing war and occupation as a strategic option, adopting murder, destruction and a scorched earth policy as a means to eradicate the Palestinian people, thus challenging Security Council resolutions and international legitimacy.

In conclusion, we would like to say that the support of the League of Arab States for the United Nations proceeds from the conviction of its member States and from its full commitment to the noble principles, purposes and values of the United Nations Charter. As a regional organization, the League of Arab States is committed to strengthening its constructive and fruitful cooperation with the United Nations in all fields and in all the areas covered by the draft resolution, which emphasizes the positive and effective aspects of the cooperation between the two organizations.

The President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 54/5 of 8 October 1999, I call on the Secretary-General of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization, Mr. Valeri Chchelashvili.

Mr. Chchelashvili (Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization): It is an honour for me to briefly take the floor in order to inform the Assembly about the main activities of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC) in the framework of deliberations on draft resolution A/57/L.11, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization". On behalf of the organization, I would like to express sincere gratitude to the Republic of Albania for initiating the draft resolution, and to the Republic of Armenia, current Chairman of the organization, for introducing it. They did a remarkable job in preparing the draft resolution.

The Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization is a relatively young regional organization. It was established three years ago, in 1999, on the basis of its charter, which has been ratified and is a legally binding international treaty. The initiative to create the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization, however, was launched 10 years ago, on 25 June 1992, by 11 heads of State or Government.

During the past 10 years, a new set of international relations that are far more complex than those that previously existed, emerged in the world, including in the Black Sea region. The most dramatic changes were witnessed in South-East Europe and the Black Sea area in particular, where new players — both States and international entities — appeared in the international arena. While opening up new avenues, these changes also present new challenges. Consultations and the sharing of views, while still important, are no longer enough. The challenges of the twenty-first century require an updated and strengthened regional partnership rather than simple cooperation. Experience in the region suggests that the earlier and more concerted the action the more beneficial it is for all participants.

This period of 10 years nearly coincided with the tenth anniversary of the BSEC, not just in terms of time but also in spirit. Having just celebrated its tenth anniversary, it is evident that BSEC contributed to the strengthening of the Black Sea mentality, and perhaps to the development of synergy between its 11 member States. Recent developments in the organization have enabled us to develop a new understanding and approach new dilemmas, among them the enlargement of the organization and, the most challenging goal of all, the implementation of the BSEC Economic Agenda for the future. We are confident that the developments in BSEC will serve to further increase its role in the Black Sea region, which will have an important place in the new European architecture.

The tenth anniversary of BSEC, which was celebrated at the Istanbul decennial summit on 25 June 2002, offered an additional opportunity for member States to reassert their commitment to regional economic cooperation within the BSEC framework. It was a landmark event, giving new impetus to the organization's work and paving the way for the strengthening of cooperation among its member States. It is not often that, in a single day, the understanding and common vision of the member States, the reputation of BSEC institutions, the visibility of the process and the system for managing regional cooperation are all improved. We witnessed all that on 25 June 2002, when the decennial summit took place in Istanbul, the birthplace of BSEC.

The heads of delegations, through the Istanbul decennial summit declaration, issued an ambitious and impressive mandate, thereby charting future prospects for cooperation in BSEC. The lesson of the Istanbul decennial summit is that the member States will increasingly have to define their interests with regard to the future of the region, while keeping in mind what can be achieved by introducing a collective vision and by working as part of a group, not as individual players. Every member State has interests that it should seek to promote. But those interests can be better realized through a collective vision of the region's

future that facilitates a regional dimension, which provides strong enhancement to bilateral cooperation.

Over the past decade, the BSEC process has contributed to, and supported, significant progress in such important areas of cooperation as trade, banking and finance, transport, energy and electrical networks, science, statistical data, combating organized crime and the simplification of cross-border and customs procedures. The philosophy of the organization is to focus on windows of opportunity where consensus is in place, or at least where it is emerging. We hope to widen those windows through mutual efforts and activities.

At the same time, we have no illusions about solving all the region's problems. However, we believe that by applying a pragmatic concept of economic cooperation as a reliable confidence-building measure, and with our knowledge of the region and our network of cooperation, we can promote trust between and among member countries, thus paving the way for a new system of stability and security in the Black Sea area.

The draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization, adopted two years ago at the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly, opened new avenues for cooperation with BSEC. Since then, we have built up impressive and promising cooperation with such various United Nations agencies and specialized institutions as the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Environment Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization and others.

We are convinced that the draft resolution on cooperation with the BSEC that is currently under consideration will further strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and other organizations of the United Nations system and the Organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation, and contribute to the promotion of the purposes and principles of the United Nations as well as the statutory goals and objectives of BSEC.

Before I conclude, I would like, on behalf of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, to extend our heartfelt thanks to all the delegations that contributed to this draft resolution. I would be grateful if all delegations present here would kindly lend their support to this draft resolution, so that it can be adopted by consensus, as in previous years.

The President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 3369 (XXX), of 10 October 1975, I call on the Observer for the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

Mr. Lamani (Organization of the Islamic Conference) (*spoke in Arabic*): I have the honour to address the General Assembly on the agenda item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations". I would also like to convey the greetings of the Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and to wish the Assembly every success in its work at the fifty-seventh session.

As this is the first time I address the Assembly at the fifty-seventh session, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to the President and his colleagues in the Bureau on their election to their high offices. We are confident that the fifty-seventh session of the Assembly will be very ably directed under his presidency. I also take this opportunity to pay tribute to his predecessor, Mr. Han Seung-soo and to the members of his Bureau, and to commend him for his able and effective work at the previous session.

We have read with interest the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/57/405. We believe that report to be an important and useful document, as it contains informative details pertaining to the cooperation between our two organizations during the period under review. I wish to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to the Secretary-General for his important and valuable report and for his wise leadership role in enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations. We also commend the Secretariat for its part in the preparation of the report, which also includes contributions from several other bodies of the United Nations system.

Much of the Secretary-General's report is devoted to the status of the implementation of programmes and activities in priority areas of cooperation, jointly developed by our two organizations and their respective agencies and bodies during the period under review. The report points out that the progress of implementation is encouraging. On behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and its specialized and affiliated bodies, I would like to

reassure the General Assembly and its affiliated bodies that we continue to be dedicated to the joint tasks we are pursuing.

In his capacity as the Chairman of the Islamic Group in New York, Ambassador Elfatih Mohamed Ahmed Erwa, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Sudan, has introduced draft resolution A/57/L.28, on the subject of cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. I would like to draw the Assembly's attention to two particularly significant operative paragraphs of the draft resolution.

First, with regard to operative paragraph 3, the two organizations are requested to continue to cooperate in their common search for solutions to global problems such as questions related to international peace and security, disarmament, self-determination, decolonization, fundamental human rights, social and economic development and technical cooperation. Pursuant to previous resolutions on this subject, contacts and dialogue between the United Nations and the OIC and their respective agencies and bodies will continue to be strengthened through the support of the Islamic Group in New York and Geneva and a number of OIC contact groups and committees at the United Nations. The two Permanent Observer Missions of the OIC to the United Nations in New York and in Geneva are actively taking part in the work of the United Nations, its funds and programmes in the capacity of observers, and are serving as channels of communication and consultation between the United Nations and its specialized agencies on the one hand, and the OIC and its subsidiary agencies on the other, in all matters of common concern. We look forward to further strengthening that cooperation in the future.

Secondly, paragraph 5 deals with the subject of close cooperation between the two organizations in peace-building, reconstruction and development in Afghanistan. As the Secretary-General indicates in paragraph 10 of his report (A/57/405), close contacts between our organizations, covering many aspects of cooperation, have been developed. The events of 11 September 2001 wrought important changes in the situation in Afghanistan, indicating the need for even closer cooperation in peacemaking, preventive diplomacy and peacekeeping.

OIC's support for United Nations activities in this context is extremely useful. OIC is working to bolster United Nations efforts in this area and is ready to promote its work in all activities that are in the best interests of our member States. In this regard, I pay a special tribute to the great and devoted efforts of Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, and offer him our full and ongoing support in his important and historic endeavours.

In paragraph 5 of his report, the Secretary-General refers to the participation of the United Nations in the tenth Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers to discuss the grave situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, on 10 December 2001 in Doha, Qatar. Consultations between the United Nations and OIC have continued with a view to finding a just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine and the Arab-Israeli conflict. We express the hope that the United Nations will devote the same concern that it has devoted to the conflict in Afghanistan to the Middle East and to the construction of Palestinian national institutions, infrastructure and economic and social capacity in order to end the Israeli occupation of Palestinian and Arab territories and to enable the Palestinian people to exercise its right of self-determination and to establish its independent State, with Jerusalem as its capital. We are convinced that the United Nations has an important and mandatory role in implementing the general will of the international community, embodied specifically in many General Assembly and Security Council resolutions.

I shall conclude my statement on the same note of hope and expectations as we did in past years for the future of cooperation between our two organizations in all fields, in the interests of our common member States. While history will judge the outcome of such cooperation, the demands of the global village that we look forward to creating on our common journey to achieve peace, progress and well-being will offer opportunities and challenges that must not be squandered. The rewards of such an endeavour would appear to be promising. Before the General Assembly, we pledge the full and continuous cooperation of OIC as it discharges its duties and undertakes its lofty and noble work.

The President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 55/161 of 12 December 2000, I now call on the Secretary-General of the Economic Community of Central African States.

Mr. Cosme (Economic Community of Central African States) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the office of the Secretary-General of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), it is my pleasure to extend our warm congratulations to you, Sir, on your well-deserved election to the presidency of the General Assembly of our universal Organization. We also congratulate your predecessor on his enlightened guidance of this noble United Nations organ.

May I also congratulate and encourage Mr. Kofi Annan in his resolve to make the United Nations more effective so that it may meet the challenges facing our world. More specifically, I commend him for his personal investment in finding negotiated solutions to the problems of our subregion.

I also wish to welcome the Swiss Confederation and the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, which were recently admitted to membership of the United Nations.

Conflict resolution is one of the priority missions that the United Nations has assigned to regional and subregional organizations, pursuant to Chapters VI and VIII of the Charter. The adoption of resolution 55/22 on cooperation between the United Nations system and ECCAS and resolution 55/161 granting observer status in the United Nations to ECCAS stress that vision while forming the very bedrock of relations between our two institutions. Those resolutions also strengthen our cooperation with the United Nations Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa.

The United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa provide ECCAS with valuable technical and financial assistance in the framework of trade liberalization and the free circulation of certain categories of citizen within the Community. ECCAS has also signed partnership agreements with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations leading to the establishment of a regional food security programme covering all the countries of the subregion. We have also signed a cooperation agreement with the World Health Organization, particularly in the context of efforts to combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic, malaria and tuberculosis.

The international community, through the World Bank and the European Union, supports ECCAS peace-building and stability initiatives in countries emerging from conflict, particularly by establishing an international demobilization and reintegration programme, estimated at $500 million, which will make it possible to provide a global framework for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration efforts; by setting up a coherent coordination mechanism among donors in order to mobilize available resources; and by providing a platform for national and regional consultations.

To that end, ECCAS is seeking sustained and firm support to allow a swift resumption of sustainable development activities involving the participation of women and young people, who are the principal victims of the horrors of war. ECCAS believes that the time has come to further strengthen its ties with the United Nations, particularly in the areas of peacekeeping and conflict prevention. I take this opportunity to reiterate the appeal of ECCAS to the Members, bodies and organs of the United Nations that have not yet established relations with ECCAS to consider doing so, with a view to helping our subregion to strengthen its capacity with regard to peacekeeping, security, stability and development. Close cooperation with United Nations bodies — particularly with the Secretariat — would help to make the ECCAS Peace and Security Council more operational, thus ensuring better monitoring and prevention of potential conflicts at the level of our subregion.

In that context, we should like to welcome the conclusion yesterday, 20 November 2002, of the Lusaka Protocol to the Angola Peace Agreements, which enables that country to turn a sad page in its history and to dedicate itself to peace-building, to national reconciliation and to rebuilding the country. Furthermore, we welcome the positive development of the situation in Burundi, the Pretoria talks concerning the peace agreements in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the implementation of the Libreville accord related to the dispute between Chad and the Central African Republic.

Assembly members will recall that, on 22 October 2002, the Secretary-General of ECCAS briefed the Security Council on the situation prevailing in our subregion as well as on the mechanisms that member States have put in place in order to restore lasting peace, security and development. On that occasion, the Security Council reaffirmed the need to promote and strengthen the partnership between the United Nations system and ECCAS with regard to peace and security

as well as in the area of economic integration. We are therefore confident in the international community's support, which will enable the countries of our subregion to implement the programmes that have been formulated and to respond to reconstruction and recovery needs. Such support by the international community could also be carried out within the context of the new mandate entrusted to our community in the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development at the regional level, thus making ECCAS one of the pillars of the African Union and of the African economic community.

We earnestly hope that cooperation between the United Nations and ECCAS will be extended to include all areas of regional integration. From that perspective, we call on the General Assembly to adopt resolution A/57/L.25, introduced by the Ambassador of the Republic of the Congo, to whom we should like to express our appreciation on behalf of our Community's current chairmanship. We should also like to express our gratitude to all States that have become sponsors of the resolution.

The President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 44/6 of 17 October 1989, I now call on the observer for the Council of Europe.

Mr. De Jonge (Council of Europe): It is a great honour for me to address the General Assembly of the United Nations in the debate on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations. This is the third time that a report on cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe has figured on the agenda of the General Assembly.

However, cooperation between the Council of Europe and the United Nations is long-standing, dating back to the creation of the Council, in 1949. The report of the Secretary-General (A/57/225) reflects very well the importance and the scope of current cooperation between the Council of Europe and the United Nations and most of its specialized agencies and bodies. That cooperation is best illustrated by the conclusion in Rome of the 1950 European Convention on Human Rights, which represented for the then-signatory Governments the first step towards the collective enforcement of certain of the rights stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In the nearly 50 years since it entered into force, the Convention has matured into probably the strongest and most effective human rights treaty in existence. It is mandatory for all 44 member States of the Council of Europe, each of which has accepted the compulsory jurisdiction of the European Court of Human Rights. That means that 800 million Europeans now have access to the Court if their rights, as protected under the Convention, are violated and provided that they have exhausted national means of appeal.

The protection of human rights is at the forefront of the Council of Europe's work as a standard-setting organization. Universal values, as they are defined and protected by the United Nations, are reflected in the Council of Europe's key instruments, such as the European Social Charter and the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. The protection and the strengthening of human rights are essential and indispensable tasks that require the relentless efforts of international cooperation at both the global and regional levels. Although our efforts focus on Europe, we stand ready to contribute to the work of the United Nations and of relevant regional organizations. I should like to mention in particular our excellent cooperation with both the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on many key issues related to the protection of human rights, the status of refugees and the treatment of asylum seekers and displaced persons in Europe.

In a globalizing world, continents and countries become more interdependent, which inevitably requires increased cooperation at many levels and in many areas.

We are now faced with the serious threat of international terrorism which requires intensive cooperation between Governments and organizations. The Council of Europe has done its utmost to counter these threats. After 11 September, the Committee of Ministers adopted a threefold approach to the fight against terrorism — namely, intensifying legal cooperation, ensuring that measures against terrorism do not undermine human rights and fundamental freedoms and promoting intercultural and inter-religious dialogue.

The Multidisciplinary Group on International Action against Terrorism, set up two years ago, has now completed updating the 1977 European Convention on Suppression of Terrorism, and a new

Protocol was approved in substance by the Committee of Ministers at their recent meeting on 7 November. This text lists the offences, which may never be regarded as political or politically motivated, and now includes all the offences covered by the United Nations anti-terrorist Conventions. Furthermore, the Convention has been opened to observer States, and the Committee of Ministers may decide to open it to other non-member States on a case-by-case basis. One provision covers the possibility of refusing to extradite offenders to countries where they risk being exposed to the death penalty, torture or life imprisonment without parole. Possibilities to refuse extradition on the basis of reservation to the Convention have been significantly reduced, and such refusals will be considered with a follow-up mechanism.

But it is of paramount importance that the fundamental values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law do not fall victim to the fight against terrorism. In that spirit, on 11 July 2002 the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers adopted Guidelines on Human Rights and the Fight against Terrorism. These Guidelines are the first international text designed to help States in finding the right balance between the requirements of efficiently protecting society and the preservation of fundamental rights and freedoms. The Guidelines were very well received in our European capitals and have been referred to by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in his report on "Measures to eliminate international terrorism" (document A/57/183/Add.1).

The Council of Europe firmly believes that intercultural and inter-religious dialogue can contribute to reducing certain causes of terrorism and the support from which it may benefit. Several projects designed to promote such dialogue have been launched by the Council of Europe. I would like to draw your attention especially to a two-year plan for intercultural dialogue and conflict prevention that maps out a whole host of activities and programmes intended to stimulate dialogue, with the aim of furthering understanding and avoiding clashes between different cultures. In this context, we are also strengthening our cooperation with the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). The Council of Europe's North-South Centre has also made extensive efforts to enlarge the scope of this dialogue in the Mediterranean basin.

I am happy to inform you that, last April, Bosnia and Herzegovina became the forty-fourth member State of the Council of Europe. The Council of Europe and the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) have cooperated and consulted on political, administrative and legal reform in the country. The United Nations gave much support to the country's accession to the Council of Europe. The current work of the Council of Europe aims at assisting Bosnia and Herzegovina in complying with the commitments accepted by the country upon its accession. The numerous commitments relate to the implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement, full respect for the Council of Europe standards of democracy, human rights and the rule of law and the strengthening of democratic institutions at State level.

In September, the Parliamentary Assembly recommended that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia become a member of the Council of Europe as soon as the constitutional charter was adopted by the Parliaments of Serbia and Montenegro. However, at the Ministerial meeting of the Council of Europe a fortnight ago, the Ministers of member States regretted that circumstances at present do not yet permit the adoption of an official invitation to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to join the Council of Europe, failing the adoption of the charter. The Ministers encouraged the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to reach an agreement on this issue and urged it to fulfil its commitment to the principles of the Council of Europe by complying with all its international obligations, in particular by cooperating fully with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). The development of the situation is being systematically monitored by the Council of Europe on the basis, in particular, of the reports by the Secretary-General's Special Envoy to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The Council of Europe is already actively implementing cooperation and assistance programmes with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in order to prepare the country for membership. We hope that the country can join our organization as soon as possible.

The collaboration between the Council of Europe and the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) is continuing in various important areas. The Council of Europe has given support with regard to the drafting of the constitutional framework, human rights, legal reform, local democracy and

education. At the request of UNMIK and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of Europe, yet again, assumed responsibility for the observation of the electoral process in Kosovo last October. The elections were deemed successful and largely in compliance with international standards.

The Council of Europe is strongly committed to creating the conditions for stability and democratic development in South-East Europe. It actively contributes to the implementation of the Ohrid Agreement, which laid a firm foundation for future peaceful development in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. It is also contributing to the work of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe in areas concerning corruption, organized crime, money-laundering, migration, refugees, nationality, police training, and by ensuring the efficiency and independence of the judiciary.

The Council of Europe attaches great value to its cooperation with the United Nations Centre for International Crime Prevention in fighting organized crime, corruption and human trafficking. The Council of Europe has addressed these and related problems by adopting and updating several conventions, such as the European Convention against money-laundering and the Penal and Civil Conventions against Corruption.

In November 2001, the Council of Europe opened for signature the first international Convention on Cybercrime. The Convention covers three main topics: harmonization of national laws that define offences, definition of investigation and prosecution procedures to cope with global networks and establishment of a rapid and effective system of international cooperation. The Council of Europe was quick to respond to certain new forms of cybercrime — namely, racist or xenophobic acts committed through computer systems. On 7 November, the Committee of Ministers thus adopted a Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime concerning such acts, which will be opened for signature early next year. All these are open to non-member States.

Furthermore, I would like to inform you that the Council of Europe is currently examining the possibility of preparing a convention on the trafficking of human beings, which will be complementary to the Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

The Council of Europe remains committed to the restoration of democracy, human rights and the rule of law in the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation. There can only be a political solution to this conflict. The Council of Europe is actively supporting all efforts in this direction.

Since June 2000, Council of Europe staff members have provided consultative expertise to the Office of the Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation for Ensuring Human and Civil Rights and Freedoms in the Chechen Republic. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has also worked in the Joint Working Group with the Duma on Chechnya, which has facilitated and provided support for the initiative towards a political solution to the conflict.

The Council of Europe fully condemns all terrorist activities, especially the sort of activities that were responsible for the loss of life in the Moscow theatre recently. At the same time, the Council of Europe urges the Russian authorities to comply with the Guidelines on human rights and the fight against terrorism to ensure balance between the requirements of security and liberty, to abide by the principle of proportionality of any use of force and to protect the right to life.

We are following with growing concern the effects the conflict in Chechnya is having on Georgia. Currently, relations between Russia and Georgia are characterized by tension. Further instability in Georgia, already upset by the unresolved conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, threatens to block democratic reform. Recently a delegation from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe visited the Pankisi valley and formulated specific proposals for cooperation between Georgia and Russia. That is why the Secretary General of the Council of Europe has recently appointed a Special Representative in Tblisi. He will further develop the already excellent cooperation between the Council of Europe and the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia.

The Council of Europe seeks to make a contribution to the conflict-settlement effort in our long-standing "areas of excellence" — developing partnerships with civil society and putting at the disposal of the negotiators the relevant European legal

experience through our Commission for Democracy through Law, the so-called Venice Commission. Progress towards normalization of the situation in the Gali district would not only facilitate the return of internally displaced persons, but also broaden possibilities for work with civil society. The Council of Europe maintains good working cooperation with United Nations specialized agencies such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the voluntary repatriation of the formerly deported Meskhetian population, the restitution of property rights in the context of South Ossetia and other issues.

The Council of Europe attaches great importance to the International Criminal Court: 42 member States of the Council of Europe have now signed the Rome Statute and 33 of them have ratified it. The Council has been very active in promoting ratification. In April, the Committee of Ministers issued a declaration calling on member and non-member States to become parties to the Statute. For its part, the Parliamentary Assembly recently adopted a resolution in which it called upon all member and observer States of the Council of Europe to establish a common position to ensure the efficient functioning of the Court and to refrain from any acts that might compromise its integrity. The Parliamentary Assembly also encouraged them to provide all necessary cooperation and assistance with a view to ensuring the earliest possible effective functioning of the Court.

I would like to single out another human rights area where the Council of Europe, together with the European Union, has adopted a clear position. I am referring to our efforts to promote the universal abolition of the death penalty. Within Europe, further progress in that matter was achieved in May 2002, when the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, at their meeting in Vilnius, adopted Protocol No. 13 to the European Convention of Human Rights, on the abolition of the death penalty in all circumstances. It was signed by 36 member States, which is a record number for a legal instrument's opening for signature. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has been particularly committed to the abolition of the death penalty. Based on its resolution adopted in June last year, the Assembly asked to institute a moratorium on executions as a first step to obtain full abolition of the death penalty in observer States that still exercise the death penalty. We hope that this will be a decisive step towards a universal abolition.

The Council of Europe has been particularly active in fighting racism and xenophobia and, accordingly, has made a significant contribution in Durban last year to the World Conference against Racism. As a follow-up, the Committee of Ministers adopted last June a new Statute for the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), which consolidates its role as an independent human rights monitoring body on issues related to racism and racial discrimination. ECRI has adopted a programme of action that constitutes the basis for our contribution to the implementation of the conclusions of the World Conference against Racism.

In May of this year, the Council of Europe took an active part in the General Assembly's special session on children. In preparation of its contribution, the Council of Europe had cooperated closely with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). In addition, we had worked together with UNICEF in preparing the Second World Congress against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, which was convened in Yokohama last December. At the request of UNICEF, we organized a European Regional Preparatory Meeting in Budapest in November 2001.

The Council of Europe also made an active contribution to the Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development. In a political message addressed to the Conference, the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the principles agreed at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and recognized the role and responsibilities of Europe in promoting those principles, achieving more balanced development, enhancing education, health, culture and social development, and strengthening good governance and democratic processes. They also declared their readiness to cooperate with the United Nations to achieve those goals. The Council of Europe is committed to taking forward the sustainable development agenda, notably by promoting the signature and the ratification of relevant international and regional legal instruments, in particular of the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

An important event since the last General Assembly session, involving both our organizations, was the Working Meeting of Representatives of Regional Mechanisms, organized by the Council of Europe in Strasbourg in October. The meeting was a follow-up to the Vilnius Declaration on Regional Cooperation and the Consolidation of Democratic Stability in Greater Europe, adopted by our Committee of Ministers in Lithuania in May 2002. The Strasbourg meeting focused on regional mechanisms as vectors for developing democratic stability and European standards, as well as on cooperation in areas such as human rights, the rule of law, the fight against terrorism, local democracy and cross-border cooperation.

The political orientation of our cooperation with the United Nations and other regional organizations in Europe is very much determined by the annual High-Level Tripartite Meeting, which is hosted on a rotating basis by the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation of Europe and the Council of Europe. Representatives from the European Commission, the International Organization for Migration and the International Committee of the Red Cross also participate in those meetings. They help to improve coordination and cooperation in areas of common concern, notably with regard to conflict prevention and peace-building activities in Europe. We look forward to participating and contributing to the forthcoming High-Level Tripartite Meeting to be organized in February 2003 by the United Nations Office in Geneva.

The cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe covers a wide range of fields, and it would not be possible to mention all of them here. The examples I have given may suffice to illustrate that cooperation and coordination has increased significantly in the last few years. We thus look forward to continuing our cooperation with the United Nations in our efforts to promote peace and stability in Europe and elsewhere.

The President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 2011 (XX) of 11 October 1965 and decision 56/475 of 15 August 2002, I call on the observer for the African Union.

Mr. Ngung (African Union) *(spoke in French)*: It is an honour and a genuine pleasure for me to take the floor for the first time on behalf of the African Union in this Assembly. At the outset I give my warm congratulations to you, Sir, upon your election as President of the Assembly. Rest assured that the African Union stands ready to support you in the hard work ahead, and in bringing this session to a successful conclusion.

I take this moment to thank all those who have already spoken words of encouragement and support for the African Union and the United Nations in their efforts to strengthen their cooperation in the context of a mutually beneficial partnership. In particular I would like to mention the Permanent Representative of South Africa, who is the representative of the Chairman of the African Union and who introduced the draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union.

The Secretary-General's report, document A/57/351 of 26 August 2002, boldly sets forth the work and achievements of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) over the period under consideration, mainly in the political and economic areas, in terms of peacekeeping, humanitarian affairs, human rights, health and the environment. The report underscores the excellent relations that have marked cooperation between the two institutions. We are delighted and hope this cooperation will continue in this manner.

After nearly forty years of the OAU — during which it played a decisive and very special role in the liberation of the continent, affirmation of a common identity and achievement of the unity of our continent and the political emancipation of African peoples — the African Union took over on 9 July 2002 in Durban, South Africa, with an even more onerous mission and many challenges to meet.

Since the Durban Summit, the African Union has become a reality with which the United Nations and the international community must reckon. At its first session, the Union's Assembly adopted important decisions, including decisions with regard to the interim period. As to the interim period, the Assembly empowered the Interim Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union, Mr. Amara Essy, to set up the structure for the Commission while continuing to deal with the urgent problems facing Africa, which include conflict situations across the continent.

Preventing, managing and settling conflicts remains a priority for our organization. As almost

everyone knows, the persistence of hotbeds of tension and the resurgence of conflicts in Africa seriously hinder development of the continent. Aware of this fact, the Assembly of the African Union decided, at its first session, to create a council for peace and security. A protocol on the establishment of that council was adopted in Durban and an appeal was issued to the members States of the African Union to ratify that particular protocol to ensure that it quickly enters into force.

Setting up the structure of the Commission, as well as that of the Peace and Security Council and other bodies of the African Union, is a difficult and delicate undertaking on which the future and sound operation of the Union hinge. The Union will not be able to appropriately meet the expectations of Africans unless it is built upon solid foundations. In order to successfully carry out its mission, the African Union needs the help of partners, in particular that of the United Nations.

Let me welcome the assistance already provided by the United Nations to the young African Union. Indeed, as I speak before your Assembly, a United Nations delegation led by the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs is in Addis Ababa to evaluate, together with the Commission of the African Union, what kind of assistance the Commission will need in the context of cooperation between our two institutions.

With the birth of the African Union, African leaders took a major decision to eradicate poverty and drive underdevelopment from the continent. This time around, the leaders of Africa have not come with empty hands before the international community, but rather with a well-structured programme of action, commonly called the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). NEPAD, whose objective is to catch up on the backwardness separating Africa from the developed countries, highlights the following priority areas: peace and security, democracy and good governance, human rights, health, agriculture and debt. This programme is founded on a common vision and the firm determination of African leaders to put their countries individually and collectively on the path of growth and sustainable development, so that Africa will no longer be sidelined from globalization.

NEPAD, the tool Africa forged to free itself from the constraints of underdevelopment, was well received by the G-8 Summit, the European Union, the international community and donors. At the major international conferences, such as Monterrey, Doha and Johannesburg, the implementation of NEPAD drew international support. The General Assembly, which set aside the entire day of 16 September 2002 for NEPAD, adopted resolution 57/2, calling upon the United Nations system and the international community, in particular donor countries, to assist with the implementation of the New Partnership. Our concern and our wish is that the support thus voiced for NEPAD at those conference will not be mere pieties, but rather that the decisions and recommendations made at the Monterrey, Doha and Johannesburg summits will indeed be realized.

The African Union, which succeeded the Organization of African Unity, inherited both the assets and liabilities of the OAU. The Union intends to live up to its obligations and to pursue cooperation with regional and subregional organizations and to continue to support their initiatives to speed the economic integration of our continent and turn Africa into a powerful continent. And yet, the problem of HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases such as tuberculosis and malaria decimating our people across Africa, the issue of external debt which has brought certain African countries to their knees, the problem of refugees and displaced persons, the combating of terrorism which has today become the number-one concern of the international community, are all on the agenda of the African Union.

With respect to combating terrorism, I should point out that Africa did not wait for the events of 11 September 2001 to organize, at the continental level, the fight against international terrorism. In the wake of the terrorist attacks perpetrated in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, the heads of State or Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), meeting in Algiers in July 1999, adopted the OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism. That Convention has been ratified by the African countries and will enter into force on 6 December 2002.

At the historic Durban summit, the Assembly of the African Union considered all the questions of which I have spoken, and important decisions were taken to put an end to those scourges. It is clear that all these problems can be solved only with international coordination and cooperation. For its part, the African

Union remains ready to cooperate with the United Nations in all areas of common interest.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on agenda item 22 and sub-items (a) to (s).

I now give the floor to the representative of Armenia.

Mr. Abelian (Armenia): In my capacity as Chairman-in-Office of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization, I would like to propose the following revisions to draft resolution A/57/L.11.

In paragraphs 1, 4 and 9, the word "Welcomes" should be replaced with the words "Takes note of".

In paragraph 5, the word "particularly" should be inserted after the word "initiatives".

In paragraphs 11 and 12, the words "the Secretary-General of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization" should be replaced with the words "the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization".

With those changes, it is the hope of the sponsors that this draft resolution will be adopted without a vote.

The President: I call on the representative of the Congo.

Mr. Makayat-Safouesse (Congo) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the Economic Community of Central African States, I have the honour of presenting oral revisions to draft resolution A/57/L.25, on cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States.

The revisions relate to both preambular and operative paragraphs of the text. The revisions to the preamble appear in the document that has been distributed in the General Assembly Hall. I also wish to point out that, for the moment, the revised text has been completed only in the English version.

With respect to the preamble, after the twelfth preambular paragraph, we have inserted four new paragraphs which are included in the document that has been distributed to delegations. In the twelfth preambular paragraph, all text after the words "all parties" should be deleted.

With respect to the operative part, in paragraph 3, the words "Invites those States" should be replaced by the words "Invites the States" and the words "Central Africa" should be replaced by the words "the Community". In paragraph 6, the words "to increase" should be replaced by the words "to consider seriously increases in". In paragraph 7, the words "to contribute" should be replaced by the words "to consider contributing". In paragraph 11, the words "as a whole" should be deleted. In paragraph 13, the words "a view to ensuring" should be replaced by "a view to encouraging". In paragraph 14, the words "Calls upon the Secretary-General" should be replaced by "Invites the international community", and the words "to support the Community" should be replaced by the words "to consider supporting the Community".

We thank all our partners for their respect and cooperation during the negotiations on this draft resolution.

The President: I call on the representative of Lebanon.

Mr. Diab (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): As Lebanon is the Chairman of the Group of Arab States for this month, it is my honour to present the following oral revision to draft resolution A/57/L.32.

In the last preambular paragraph, the word "joint" should be inserted following the words "for the realization of the".

The President: I call on the representative of Chile.

Mr. Valdés (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Draft resolution A/57/L.38 has been the subject of informal consultations involving many delegations. The upshot of these consultations are reflected in the text that has been circulated regarding which I will now proceed to offer a number of oral amendments.

(*spoke in English*)

Paragraph 3 should read as follows:

> "Decides to allow the circulation of official documents adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union in the General Assembly on the understanding that no financial implications result for the United Nations and that this would not constitute a precedent for other organizations with observer status."

(*spoke in Spanish*)

I would like once again to thank the sponsors and other delegations for their cooperation. I submit this draft resolution for consensus adoption.

The President: I call now on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote or position before action is taken on the draft resolutions before the Assembly.

Mr. Wøggsborg (Denmark): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, as well as the European Free Trade Association country of the European Economic Area Norway, align themselves with this statement.

The European Union (EU) wishes to express its regret that it will not be possible to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.40 by consensus. The European Union attaches great importance to the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and finds the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) crucial in bringing about the global monitoring system to verify compliance with the Treaty.

We have previously welcomed the adoption of a partnership agreement between the Preparatory Commission of the CTBTO and the United Nations as well as the conclusion of cooperation agreements with United Nations specialized agencies and programmes. In the view of the European Union, the Treaty marks an important, tangible step towards non-proliferation and disarmament in accordance with article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The Non-Proliferation Treaty is and will continue to be a cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament.

The European Union will vote in favour of the draft resolution entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization" under agenda item 22 (q).

Mr. Shacham (Israel): The delegation of Israel will join the consensus on a draft resolution regarding cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States for the ninth consecutive year. In doing so we are guided by the desire to make peace with our neighbours, all of which are members of the League of Arab States. Israel supports cooperation between the United Nations and various regional organizations, including the League of Arab States. Indeed, such cooperation is based on the provisions of the United Nations Charter.

Draft resolution A/57/L.32 is the first on an issue related to the Middle East that the General Assembly will take action at its fifty-seventh session. We are pleased that the draft resolution is to be adopted by consensus. In joining the consensus, we would like to demonstrate to all parties our willingness to forego unnecessary discord in international forums and to stress the need to exercise restraint, both in the language of draft resolutions to be submitted and in all related statements. We cannot restore confidence and trust in the Middle East by engaging in polemics in our debates in New York.

Peacemaking is by its very nature a bilateral endeavour between the parties, and controversial rhetoric offered in international forums is surely counterproductive. It is, therefore, unfortunate that the debate regarding cooperation between the United Nations and a regional organization was exploited by the observer of the League of Arab States to direct attacks against a Member State and to promote a partisan political perspective.

My delegation utterly rejects the inflammatory language used today by the Arab League observer, who has venomously slandered Israel, accusing my country of refusing peace and of pursuing a policy designed to murder, destroy and eradicate the Palestinian people — this on a day when an Arab suicide terrorist detonated a shrapnel-filled bomb aboard a Jerusalem city bus, indiscriminately murdering 11 Israeli civilians, many of them schoolchildren, while maiming dozens more. Placing responsibility for the recent events and for the damage to the peace process exclusively upon Israel is a grotesque distortion of the clear and present reality, and is in blatant disregard for Israel's far-reaching readiness to move towards an agreement.

At the Camp David peace summit of 2000, Israel made courageous and far-reaching proposals in order to achieve a peace agreement with the Palestinians and a historic reconciliation with the Arab world.

Regrettably, Chairman Arafat and the Palestinians did not respond in any way to those proposals. Instead, they plunged the region into a whirlpool of violence and bloodshed.

Israel stresses that, while defending the lives of its citizens, it continues to strive for peace and it will continue to act to foster reconciliation between itself and the Arab world. However, unfortunately, the League of Arab States has certain goals, objectives and policies that remain inimical to the purposes and principles of the United Nations and its Charter.

The hostility continuously shown and articulated by the League of Arab States, including a history of support for economically and militarily coercive measures against a State Member of this Organization, is clearly inconsistent with international law and the principles for which the United Nations was founded. May I remind this Assembly that more than half of the members of the League of Arab States consider themselves at war with Israel and call for its destruction. While we respect the importance of cooperation in furthering the mutual and shared objectives of the United Nations and various regional organizations, we would expect the United Nations to oppose and object to the policies of the League of Arab States which fundamentally contradict the principles of the Charter which include, among other things, the duty to resolve all disputes by peaceful means.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolutions A/57/L.11, as orally revised; A/57/L.16; A/57/L.18, as orally revised; A/57/L.21; A/57/L.22; A/57/L.24; A/57/L.25, as orally revised; A/57/L.26; A/57/L.28; A/57/L.29; A/57/L.30; A/57/L.31; A/57/L.32, as orally revised; A/57/L.38, as orally revised; A/57/L.39, as orally revised; and A/57/L.40.

Draft resolution A/57/L.11 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization". Before proceeding to take action on the draft resolution, I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become its co-sponsors: Canada, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Ukraine.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.11, as orally revised by the representative of Armenia?

Draft resolution A/57/L.11, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 57/34).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.16 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of South-East Asian Nations". I should like to announce that, since the publication of the draft resolution, the following countries have become its co-sponsors: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Canada, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji, Gabon, Georgia, India, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Nauru, New Zealand, Pakistan, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, South Africa, the Sudan and Tonga.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.16?

Draft resolution A/57/L.16 was adopted (resolution 57/35).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.18 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization". Before proceeding to take action on the draft resolution, I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft, the following countries have become its co-sponsors: Mongolia and Turkey.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.18, as orally revised by the representative of Nigeria?

Draft resolution A/57/L.18, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 57/36).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.21 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum". Before proceeding to take action on the draft resolution, I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft, the following countries have become its co-sponsors: Brunei Darussalam, India, Jamaica, Suriname and Timor-Leste.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.21?

Draft resolution A/57/L.21 was adopted (resolution 57/37).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.22 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization". I should like

to announce that, since the introduction of the draft, Suriname has become a sponsor of the draft resolution.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.22?

Draft resolution A/57/L.22 was adopted (resolution57/38).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.24 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Latin American Economic System". I should like to announce that, since the publication of the draft resolution, Timor-Leste has become a sponsor of the draft.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.24?

Draft resolution A/57/L.24 was adopted (resolution 57/39).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.25 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States". I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become its co-sponsors: Benin, Burundi, France, Morocco and the Sudan.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.25, as orally revised by the representative of the Congo?

Draft resolution A/57/L.25, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 57/40).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.26 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community". I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become its co-sponsors: Gabon, South Africa, Timor-Leste, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.26?

Draft resolution A/57/L.26 was adopted (resolution 57/41).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.28 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference". I should like to announce that, since the publication of the draft resolution, the following countries have become its co-sponsors: Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Gabon, Guinea, Iran, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Morocco, Qatar, Suriname, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.28?

Draft resolution A/57/L.28 was adopted (resolution 57/42)

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.29 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie". I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, Chile has become a sponsor of the draft.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.29?

Draft resolution A/57/L.29 was adopted (resolution 57/43).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.30 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Southern African Development Community".

I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become co-sponsors of draft resolution A/57/L.30: Ireland and Eritrea.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.30?

Draft resolution A/57/L.30 was adopted (resolution 57/44).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.31 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons".

I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/57/L.31: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Malaysia and Suriname.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.31?

Draft resolution A/57/L.31 was adopted (resolution 57/45).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.32 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.32, as orally revised by the representative of Lebanon?

Draft resolution A/57/L.32, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 57/46).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.38 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union".

I call on the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Perfiliev (Director, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council Affairs Division): By operative paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/57/L.38, as orally revised, the General Assembly would decide to allow the circulation of official documents adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union in the General Assembly, on the understanding that no financial implications would result for the United Nations and that that would not constitute a precedent for other organizations with observer status. Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/57/L.38, as orally revised, it is understood that official documents adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union would be circulated in all official languages of the Assembly and that all costs, directly or indirectly involved, would be covered in full by the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

The President: I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/57/L.38: Afghanistan, Albania, Angola, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Germany, Ghana, Guinea, Haiti, Honduras, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Israel, Kyrgyzstan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Mali, the Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nauru, Nepal, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, the Niger, Nigeria, Paraguay, the Republic of Moldova, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, Suriname, Sweden, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, Ukraine, the United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam, Yugoslavia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.38, as orally revised by the representative of Chile?

Draft resolution A/57/L.38, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 57/47).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.39 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union".

I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/57/L.39: Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mauritania, Mongolia, the Netherlands, the Niger, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Suriname and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.39, as orally revised by the representative of South Africa?

Draft resolution A/57/L.39, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 57/48).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.40 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization".

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Comoros, Congo, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta,

Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yugoslavia, Zambia

Against:

United States of America

Abstaining:

Cambodia, Ghana, Pakistan

Draft resolution A/57/L.40 was adopted by 128 votes to 1, with 3 abstentions (resolution 57/49).

[Subsequently the delegations of Cambodia and Ghana informed the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.]

The President: I shall now call on representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote after the voting. May I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Bishnoi (India): First and foremost, my delegation would like to expre[illegible] its satisfactions with the adoption of this resolution, as well as with the adoption of the resolution contained in document A/57/L.38, as orally revised. We would also like to express our deep appreciation for the efforts undertaken by the delegation of Chile and other sponsors. We would like to place on record our recognition of the constructive manner in which the delegation of Chile has engaged with us on the details of that resolution.

We are convinced of the need for cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). The concerns of the United Nations and the IPU are substantially common. The IPU can, we acknowledge, be an important ally of the United Nations in facing up to the challenges that confront the world today. We feel that some of the questions that we have had about the formulation of operative paragraph 3 of resolution 57/47 would have been shared by other parliamentary democracies as well.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union adopts declarations, resolutions and decisions on various matters that are also considered by the United Nations. At its 106th Conference, held in Ouagadougou in September 2001, it adopted by consensus a resolution urging, inter alia, the renegotiations of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). The special session of the IPU Council, held in September 2002, adopted, again by consensus, a resolution relating, inter alia, to ensuring that Governments allocate 0.7 per cent of their gross national product to official development assistance. The bodies of the IPU very rightly pronounced themselves on a wide variety of issues, from the death penalty and reproductive health to the international financial architecture and weapons of war.

There exists in most parliamentary democracies a separation of powers between the executive and legislative branches. While it is important for those two arms of the State to work harmoniously with each other, there is often constitutional space that allows for a certain degree of divergence. The positions taken by Governments at the United Nations may therefore, in some cases, differ from those contained in resolutions that have been endorsed by their delegations to the IPU. That was one of the reasons for our questions on operative paragraph 3. We have, however, given the close relations we enjoy with Chile and other sponsors, decided to go along with the consensus on resolution 57/47.

Ms. Dixon (New Zealand): New Zealand was pleased to vote in support of resolution 57/49, on cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO).

For many years, we have advocated at the United Nations the importance of a comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty, and we welcomed the adoption of the Treaty in 1996. For New Zealand the establishment of the Preparatory Commission for the CTBTO marked a significant step forward in the maintenance of international peace and security. In that regard, we support cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission. It is therefore a matter of

deep regret to my delegation that this resolution could not be adopted without a vote again this year.

Mr. Stephens (Australia): I speak in relation to the resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO).

Australia was pleased to vote for resolution 57/49. However, we were disappointed that it was necessary to bring the resolution to a vote at all. In our view, it should be possible for the General Assembly to adopt this type of procedural resolution by consensus. We think it appropriate that this resolution, as with others under this agenda item, will in the future be considered on a biennial basis.

Australia firmly supports the important work of the CTBTO in advancing nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament efforts and in establishing the international framework for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in expianation of vote after the voting.

I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 477 (V), of 1 November 1950, I now call on the Observer for the League of Arab States.

Mr. Mahmassani (League of Arab States): I think the representative of Israel has fooled no one today. The killing of Palestinians goes on unabated on a daily basis, and we all watch it on television screens. Israel has been pursuing a scorched-earth policy to annihilate the Palestinian people. In fact, a report recently published by Amnesty International says that "Israeli defence forces committed violations of international law during the course of military operations in Jenin and Nablus, including war crimes, for which they must be held accountable". The report goes on to say that "Soldiers used people as human shields, forcing them to walk in front of soldiers and to enter homes and rooms suspected of being booby-trapped or sheltering gunmen".

In fact, since Jenin, the killing has gone on unabated. In addition to Israel's pursuit of a policy to strangle and starve the Palestinian people, house demolitions, collective punishment, the killing of women and young children also continue. Everyone is watching this on television, just like a movie. This has all gone on unabated.

We want to ask the question: What is Israel doing on Arab territory? The entire question is one of occupation.

We want to ask the question: What is Israel doing on Arab territory? The entire question is one of occupation. Israel is the only country that entered the twenty-first century as a remnant of the twentieth century, an occupier and aggressor. Israel talks peace but acts war. That is what is happening. The Arab peace initiative that was adopted at the Arab summit in Beirut in March offered Israel an opportunity for peace. The Arab peace initiative was welcomed by the Security Council, the General Assembly, the European Union and the whole world, including the United States. Yet Israel rejected it. Israel refused it.

Israel does not want peace with the Arabs; it simply wants the peace of the morgue with the Palestinians. In fact, if Israel really means to have peace, let it get out of Arab territory; let it come to the negotiating table; let it talk to the Palestinians tomorrow if it really wants peace. Let it declare that it is willing to withdraw from the Arab territories to the line of 4 June 1967. That will show if Israel really intends to make peace or to continue its war.

Mr. Abelian (Armenia): I would like to exercise my right of reply to the statement made earlier this morning by the representative of Azerbaijan.

The representative of Azerbaijan, referring in his statement to the issue of Nagorny Karabakh as a conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan and employing such language as "aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan", is trying to mislead the international community. The Nagorny Karabakh conflict is not between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The conflict is between Azerbaijan and the people of Nagorny Karabakh, who were encouraged by the signs of democratic transformation in the former Soviet Union after the end of the cold war to claim their right to self-determination.

The one point made by the representative of Azerbaijan that I would agree with is that the settlement of the conflict should be based on the principles set forth in the Helsinki Final Act of 1975. What is a fait accompli, as the representative of

Azerbaijan mentioned, is that the people of Nagorny Karabakh have exercised their right to self-determination, one of the cornerstone principles of the Helsinki Final Act to which he referred.

The reference to "Armenian aggression" against Azerbaijan is totally misleading. The conflict in question is between the people of Nagorny Karabakh and the Government of Azerbaijan, which refuses to address the quest of the people of Nagorny Karabakh for their self-determination. The fighting in the region was not the result of armed aggression as Azerbaijan has tried to present it, but of the forced resort to self-defence of the Karabakh population, since its peaceful, lawful and orderly call for self-determination was responded to with military aggression by Azerbaijan aimed at the ultimate ethnic cleansing of the Armenian population in Nagorny Karabakh and in Azerbaijan. The territories that the Azerbaijani delegation referred to are currently under the control of the armed forces of Nagorny Karabakh. Hence, Armenia can bear no responsibility for it.

We do not base our arguments solely on legal or historical foundations. Armenia is determined to achieve a peaceful political solution to the conflict within the framework of the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which would ensure the right of the people of Nagorny Karabakh to live freely and securely in their homeland. The settlement of the conflict by peaceful means remains a fundamental principle of our foreign policy. Our acceptance of the several proposals made by the co-chairmanship of the OSCE Minsk Group for a peaceful settlement arises distinctly from our constructive position.

Mr. Shacham (Israel): I would like to reply to the statement just made in exercise of the right of reply by the observer of the League of Arab States.

I will spare the Assembly a rebuttal and a refutation point-by-point of the issues raised by the observer because we will all be missing our Thanksgiving weekend discussing this issue at its proper time on 29 November, not, as we are doing now, during the discussion of a draft resolution regarding cooperation with a regional organization.

I will, however, ask: Why did the observer of the League of Arab States not take this opportunity to condemn today's terrorist attack carried out by an Arab terrorist? Why did he not take this opportunity to denounce suicide terrorism, which has become the scourge of modern civilization? This blind and blatant imbalance is more than indicative of the policies of the League of Arab States in anything having to do with the Arab-Israeli conflict.

I now challenge the observer of the League of Arab States to condemn clearly the heinous terrorist attack which occurred today, scattering school lunches, backpacks and the body parts of lifeless children and other civilians killed in this attack. We all saw the pictures on television this morning of the destroyed Jerusalem city bus. I call upon him and challenge him to condemn this attack without giving any justification or mitigation or displaying empathy for the bomber, his actions and his motivations; without explaining that it is politically inexpedient for the Arab cause. I challenge him to condemn it only because it is wrong, period.

Mr. Aliyev (Azerbaijan): I would like to exercise my right of reply in response to the representative of Armenia.

I understand the desperate attempts of the Armenian representative to erase the United Nations records on the conflict in and around the Nagorny Karabakh region of Azerbaijan. It is the very definition of "the conflict in and around the Nagorny Karabakh region of the Azerbaijani Republic" that confirms the territorial integrity of my country and the Nagorny Karabakh region as an integral part of Azerbaijan. This very definition is the exact wording of the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and subsequently adopted by consensus by the General Assembly. This means that Armenia joined in and accepted that language in resolution 49/13. It is a conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia, whose Presidents are conducting direct negotiations on this particular matter.

The President: I call on the observer of the League of Arab States to make a statement in reply.

Mr. Mahmassani (League of Arab States): I shall be brief. Of course, the representative of Israel wants to spare us a prolonging of this discussion, simply because he has no argument. So now he reverts to another subject. All right, I shall accept the challenge.

The Arab League has always rejected and never condoned the killing of civilians, no matter who they are — Palestinians or Israelis. But I want now to challenge and ask the representative of Israel: Will he

condemn and reject the killing of Palestinian children on a daily basis by Israeli forces, not by some individuals? Will he now condemn the killing of women and children by Israeli forces every day?

I will tell him one thing more. The Israeli forces represent a Government and this is systematic killing. This is a procedure. This is something that goes on every day, while whoever does the blowing up in Israel are individuals and do not represent a Government. Yet, we do not condone it or accept it; we reject it. But let the representative of Israel say here and now that he condemns the killing of innocent civilians, children and women by Israeli forces on a daily basis in the occupied territories.

The President: May I remind representatives that statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Abelian (Armenia): I apologize for taking the floor a second time.

Nagorny Karabakh's secession from Azerbaijan was peaceful, legal and just. The present stalemate is the consequence of the war that Azerbaijan initiated in response to the peaceful exercise by the people of Nagorny Karabakh of their right of self-determination.

Azerbaijan is trying to reinforce its rule and sovereignty over a people who refuse to subjugate themselves to an authority that they do not trust, and no amount of diplomatic language or legal discourse can mask the fact that the men, women and children of Nagorny Karabakh have earned the right to live peacefully on their historic lands, free from alien domination and foreign occupation.

But I again reiterate that the Armenian side has always been an advocate of a peaceful political resolution of the conflict, through negotiation, within the framework of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group and with an eye on the realities on the ground. We call upon the Government of Azerbaijan for a constructive approach based on the principle of mutual compromise.

Mr. Shacham (Israel): I should like to remind the observer for the League of Arab States and Assembly Members that there is absolutely no moral equivalence between a terrorist who, in a premeditated fashion, straps a bomb onto his body, boards a bus, chooses to position himself among civilian children, women and commuters and detonates his bomb, filled with pieces of shrapnel, in order to cause as much civilian death, carnage and destruction as possible, on the one hand, and legitimate actions taken by a State in order to defend its citizens from a clear and present danger of terrorism, on the other. It is extremely unfortunate and extremely sad that Palestinian civilians are sometimes hurt in such actions, and we greatly regret that. However, I should like to remind the observer for the League of Arab States and all present that those are not the targets of Israel's counter-terrorist actions, that we do as much as possible in order to prevent collateral injury of the civilian population. There have been many cases in which Israel forces have called off anti-terrorist operations because it became clear that civilians were in the area. Occasionally, mistakes have been made, but those mistakes have been sincerely and comprehensively investigated and tactics have been changed in order to prevent them in the future. We protect civilians; Arab terrorists kill civilians. That is the difference.

Mr. Aliyev (Azerbaijan): I shall be very brief. I should like to remind the representative of Armenia about the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's ministerial decision of March 1992 establishing his country and my country as main parties to the conflict. As far as the Armenian and Azerbaijani communities of Nagorny Karabakh are concerned, they have been established as interested parties.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-items (a) to (c), (e) to (k), (m) and (o) to (s) of agenda item 22?

It was so decided.

The President: I should like to inform Members that action on draft resolution A/57/L.23 will be taken at a later date.

The meeting rose at 6.40 p.m.